THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) to (c). The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students pursuing preparatory course in I.I.T., Delhi are eligible for all amenities available to the regular SC/ST students of the Institute, provided their parental income (gross) does not excced Rs. 31.554 per annum. There is no proposal before the Government at this stage to raise the ceiling.

Bomb Scare in Aircrafts

209. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any code for handling the aircraft in case of an emergency after bomb scare; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Immediately, the passengers and baggage are unloaded and an inter-departmental team searches the aircraft thoroughly. The re-embarkation is permitted only after the checks are over and if nothing incriminating is discovered.

Forced 'Sati' in Umaria Village near Jabalpur

210. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that a newly married woman was forced to perform 'Sati' at Umaria village near Jabalpur; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken with regard to the eradication of the prevalence of such abhorrent outlawed rituals in certain parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All cases of attempt or abetment of "Sati" are liable for criminal prosecution. A media campaign is being undertaken by the State Governments and the Central Government to create awarness in the minds of the people against such practices.

National highways in Punjab

211. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the condition of the National Highways in Punjab is very deplorable;

(b) if so, the amount of money allocated to improve the condition of National Highways in Punjab during the current plan period;

(c) what is the progress regarding the improvement of the National Highways in Punjab; and

(d) by when the work on National Highways is to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) According to the information available with the Government, National Highways in Punjab are in a fairly good and trafficworthy condition. However, to improve the condition of the roads and bridges further, a works programme of Rs. 135.4 crores has been drawn out for the Seventh Five-Year Plan.

(c) and (d) The development and maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process and the improvement works are taken up in a phased manner. At present works of improvement of National Highways in an aggregate length of about 300 Kms are in various stages of progress.